

P R E C E P T S

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O F

CONJUGAL HAPPINESS.

A D D R E S S E D T O

A L A D Y on her MARRIAGE.

By JOHN LANGHORNE, D. D.

L O N D O N,

Printed for T. BECKET and P. A. DE HONDT, in the Strand.

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P R E C E P T S
O F
CONJUGAL HAPPINESS.

FRIEND, Sister, Partner of that gentle Heart,
Where my Soul lives, and holds her dearest Part;
While Love's soft Raptures these gay Hours employ,
And Time puts on the yellow Robe of Joy,
Will you, MARIA, mark with patient Ear,
The moral Muse, nor deem her Song severe.

B

Thro'

Thro' the long Course of Life's unclouded Day,
 Where sweet Contentment smiles on Virtue's Way;
 Where Fancy opes her ever-varying Views,
 And Hope strews Flowers, and leads you as she strews;
 May each fair Pleasure court thy favour'd Breast,
 By Truth protected, and by Love careſſ'd!

So Friendship vows, nor shall her Vows be vain;
 For every Pleasure comes in Virtue's Train;
 Each Charm that tender Sympathies impart,
 The Glow of Soul, the Transports of the Heart,
 Sweet Meanings that in silent Truth convey
 Mind into Mind, and steal the Soul away,
 These Gifts, O Virtue, these are all thy own;
 Lost to the Vicious, to the Vain unknown!

Yet

Yet blest with these, and happier Charms than these,
By Nature form'd, by Genius taught to please,
Ev'n you, to prove that mortal Gifts are vain,
Must yield your human Sacrifice to Pain ;
The Wizard Care shall dim those brilliant Eyes,
Smite the fair Urns, and bid the Waters rise.

With Mind unbroke that darker Hour to bear,
Nor, once his Captive, drag the Chains of Care,
Hope's radiant Sunshine o'er the Scene to pour,
Nor future Joys in present Ills devour,
These Arts your philosophic Friend may shew,
Too well experienc'd in the School of Woe.

When

When sinks the Heart, by transient Grief opprest,
 Seek not Reflection, for it wounds the Breast,
 While Memory turns, to happier Objects blind,
 Tho' once the Friend, the Traitor of the Mind,
 Past Scenes of Pain is studious to explore,
 Forgets its Joys, and thinks its Suff'rings o'er.

To Life's Horizon forward turn your Eye,
 Pass the dim Cloud, and view the bright'ning Sky ;
 On Hope's kind Wing more genial Climes survey,
 Let Fancy join, but Reason guide your Way,
 For Fancy, still to tender Woes inclin'd,
 May soothe the Heart, but misdirects the Mind.

The

The Source of half our Anguish, half our Tears;
 Is the wrong Conduct of our Hopes and Fears;
 Like ill-train'd Children, still their Treatment such,
 Restrain'd too rashly, or indulg'd too much.
 Hence Hope, projecting more than Life can give,
 Would live with Angels, or refuse to live ;
 Hence spleen-ey'd Fear, o'er-acting Caution's Part,
 Betrays those Succours Reason lends the Heart.

Yet these, submitted to fair Truth's Controul,
 These Tyrants are the Servants of the Soul :
 Thro' Vales of Peace the Dove-like Hope shall stray,
 And bear at Eve her Olive Branch away,
 In ev'ry Scene some distant Charm descry,
 And hold it forward to the bright'ning Eye ;

While watchful Fear, if Fortitude maintain,
Her trembling Steps shall ward the distant Pain.

Should erring Nature casual Faults disclose,
Wound not the Breast that harbours your Repose :

For ev'ry Grief that Breast from you shall prove,
Is one Link broken in the Chain of Love.

Soon, with their Objects, other Woes are past,
But Pains from those we love are Pains that last.

Tho' Faults or Follies from Reproach may fly,
Yet in its Shade the tender Passions die.

Love, like the Flower that courts the Sun's kind Ray,
Will flourish only in the Smiles of Day ;

Distrust's

Distrust's cold Air the generous Plant annoys,
 And one chill Blight of dire Contempt destroys.
 O shun, my Friend, avoid that dangerous Coast,
 Where Peace expires, and fair Affection's lost ;
 By Wit, by Grief, by Anger urg'd, forbear
 The Speech contemptuous, and the scornful Air.

If Heart-felt Quiet, Thoughts unmixt with Pain,
 While Peace weaves Flowers o'er Hymen's golden Chain,
 If tranquil Days, if Hours of smiling Ease,
 The Sense of Pleasure, and the Power to please,
 If Charms like these deserve your serious Care,
 Of one dark Foe, one dangerous Foe beware !
 Like *Hecla*'s Mountain, while his Heart's in Flame,
 His Aspect's cold, and Jealousy's his Name.

His

His hideous Birth his wild Disorders prove,
Begot by Hatred on despairing Love !
Her Throes in Rage the frantic Mother bore,
And the fell Sire with angry Curses tore
His sable Hair — Distrust beholding smil'd,
And lov'd her Image in her future Child.
With cruel Care, industrious to impart
Each painful Sense, each Soul-tormenting Art,
To Doubt's dim Shrine her hapless Charge she led,
Where never Sleep reliev'd the burning Head,
Where never grateful Fancy footh'd Suspence,
Or the dear Charms of easy Confidence.
Hence Fears eternal, ever restless Care,
And all the dire Associates of Despair.

Hence

Hence all the Woes he found that Peace destroy,
 And dash with Pain the sparkling Stream of Joy.

[bling Height,
 When Love's warm Breast, from Rapture's trem-
 Falls to the temp'rate Measures of Delight ;
 When calm Delight to easy Friendship turns,
 Grieve not that *Hymen's* Torch more gently burns.
 Unerring Nature, in each Purpose kind,
 Forbids long Transports to usurp the Mind ;
 For, oft dissolv'd in Joy's oppressive Ray,
 Soon would the finer Faculties decay.

True tender Love one even Tenor keeps ;
 'Tis Reason's Flame, and burns when Passion sleeps.

The Charm connubial, like a Stream that glides
 Thro' Life's fair Vale, with no unequal Tides,
 With many a Plant along its genial Side,
 With many a Flower, that blows in beauteous Pride,
 With many a Shade, where Peace in rapturous Rest
 Holds sweet Affiance to her fearless Breast,
 Pure in its Source, and temp'rate in its Way,
 Still flows the same, nor finds its Urn decay.

O Bliss beyond what lonely Life can know,
 The Soul-felt Sympathy of Joy and Woe!
 That magic Charm which makes ev'n Sorrow dear,
 And turns to Pleasure the partaken Tear!

Long

(15)

Long, beauteous Friend, to you may Heav'n impart
The soft Endearments of the social Heart !
Long to your Lot may ev'ry Blessing flow,
That Sense, or Taste, or Virtue can bestow !
And O, forgive the Zeal your Peace inspires,
To teach that Prudence which itself admires.

T H E E N D.

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